

## **Claims**

1. A method of enabling private individuals to assist law enforcement officials in the determination of traffic violations comprising the steps of:

supplying a private individual with an imaging device adapted to capture images  
5 of a target vehicle suspected of a traffic violation;

operating the imaging device to capture images of a target vehicle suspected of a traffic violation and transmitting the images of the target vehicle to an analysis center;

receiving the images of the target vehicle from the imaging device at the analysis center;

10 determining at the analysis center whether a traffic violation has occurred based on the images transmitted from the imaging device;

issuing a traffic citation if a traffic violation has occurred; and

compensating the private individual if the traffic citation is issued.

15 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of providing the private individual with a unique identification code, and labeling the images with indicia that is associated with the unique identification code of the private individual.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of charging the private  
20 individual a fee for each submission of a suspected traffic violation to the analysis center.

4. The method of claim 1, including the step of limiting the number of submissions allowed by the private individual in a given time period.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of compensating comprises paying the private individual a percentage of the fines associated with the traffic citation.

6. The method of claim 1, including the step of establishing a credit account  
5 for the private individual to administer the finances related to the operation of the imaging device.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the supplying step comprises leasing the imaging device to the private individual.

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8. A method of enabling private individuals to assist law enforcement officials in the issuance of traffic citations to operators of target vehicles suspected of traffic violations comprising the steps of:

establishing qualifications for a private individual to assist law enforcement  
15 officials in the issuance of traffic citations to operators of target vehicles suspected of traffic violations;

certifying a private individual under said qualifications to assist law enforcement officials in the issuance of traffic citations;

supplying a qualified private individual with a digital imaging device for  
20 capturing images of a target vehicle suspected of a traffic violation;

operating the digital imaging device to capture images of a target vehicle suspected of a traffic violation and submitting the images of the target vehicle to an analysis center;

receiving at the analysis center the images of the target vehicle from the digital imaging device operated by the private individual;

determining at the analysis center whether a traffic violation has occurred based on the images transmitted by the private individual;

- 5       issuing a traffic citation if a traffic violation has occurred;  
collecting a fine from the issuance of the traffic citation; and  
paying a portion of the collected fine to the private individual.

9.       The method of claim 8, further comprising the steps of providing the  
10   private individual with a unique identification code, and submitting the images with  
indicia that is associated with the unique identification code of the private individual.

10.      The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of charging the private  
individual a fee for each submission of a suspected traffic violation to the analysis center.

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11.      The method of claim 8, including the step of limiting the number of  
submissions allowed by the private individual in a given time period.

12.      The method of claim 8, wherein the supplying step comprises leasing the  
20   imaging device to the private individual.

13.      The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of establishing rules  
which would decertify the private individual from continuing to operate an imaging

device and decertifying an individual for violating an established rule.

14. A method of enabling private individuals to assist law enforcement officials in the determination of traffic violations comprising the steps of:

5 supplying a private individual with an imaging device for capturing images of a target vehicle suspected of a traffic violation and transmitting the images to an analysis center, said imaging device having an identification number associated with the private individual;

operating the imaging device to capture images of a target vehicle suspected of a  
10 traffic violation and transmitting the images of the target vehicle and the identification number to the analysis center;

receiving the images of the target vehicle from the imaging device and the identification number at the analysis center;

determining at the analysis center whether a traffic violation has occurred based  
15 on the images transmitted from the imaging device;

determining the identity of the private individual based on the identification number;

issuing a traffic citation if a traffic violation has occurred; and

compensating the private individual if a traffic citation is issued.

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